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THE ROLE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND DISARMAMENT

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Miloš KOTEREC (Slovakia)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The item entitled "The role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament" was included in the provisional agenda of the fifty-second session of the General Assembly in accordance with Assembly resolution 51/39 of 10 December 1996.

2. At its 4th plenary meeting, on 19 September 1997, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include the item in its agenda and to allocate it to the First Committee.

3. At its 2nd meeting, on 9 October 1997, the First Committee decided to hold a general debate on all disarmament and international security items allocated to it, namely, items 62 to 82, which was held at the 3rd to 12th meetings, from 13 to 17 and from 20 to 24 October (see A/C.1/52/PV.3-12). Structured discussions of specific subjects on the adopted thematic approach were held at six informal meetings, from 27 to 31 October. Draft resolutions on the items were considered at the 15th to 17th meetings, from 5 to 7 November (see A/C.1/52/PV.15-17); action was taken on them at the 18th to 24th meetings, from 10 to 14 and on 17 November (see A/C.1/52/PV.18-24).

4. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it a letter dated 1 October 1997 from the Permanent Representative of Colombia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the communiqué of the Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Heads of Delegation of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries to the fifty-second session of the General Assembly, held in New York on 25 September 1997 (A/52/447-S/1997/775).

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II. CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTION A/C.1/52/L.14

5. At the 17th meeting, on 7 November, the representative of India, on behalf of Bangladesh, Bhutan, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ghana, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kenya, Lesotho, Malaysia, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Singapore and Sri Lanka, introduced a draft resolution entitled "The role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament" (A/C.1/52/L.14).

6. At its 21st meeting, on 12 November, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.1/52/L.14 by a recorded vote of 88 to 42, with 17 abstentions (see para. 7). The voting was as follows:

In favour: Algeria, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Swaziland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Togo, Tunisia, Uganda, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: Albania, Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America.

Abstaining: Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Brazil, Canada, Georgia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Marshall Islands, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, Samoa, South Africa, Turkmenistan, Ukraine.

III. RECOMMENDATION OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

7. The First Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

The role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament

The General Assembly,

Recognizing that scientific and technological developments can have both civilian and military applications and that progress in science and technology for civilian applications needs to be maintained and encouraged,

Concerned that military applications of scientific and technological developments can contribute significantly to the improvement and upgrading of weapons of mass destruction,

Aware of the need to follow closely the scientific and technological developments that may have a negative impact on international security and disarmament, and to channel scientific and technological developments for beneficial purposes,

Cognizant that the international transfers of dual-use as well as high-technology products, services and know-how for peaceful purposes are important for the economic and social development of States,

Cognizant also of the need to regulate such transfers of dual-use goods and technologies and high technology with military applications through multilaterally negotiated, universally acceptable, non-discriminatory guidelines,

Expressing concern over the growing proliferation of ad hoc and exclusive export control regimes and arrangements for dual-use goods and technologies,

Recalling that the Final Document of the Eleventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Cartagena de Indias, Colombia, from 18 to 20 October 1995,[1] noted that restrictions being placed on access to technology through the imposition of non-transparent ad hoc export control regimes with exclusive membership tended to impede the economic and social development of developing countries,

Emphasizing that internationally negotiated guidelines for the transfer of high technology with military applications should take into account the legitimate defence requirements of all States and requirements for the maintenance of international peace and security, while ensuring that access to high-technology products and services and know-how for peaceful purposes is not denied,

1. Affirms that scientific and technological progress should be used for the benefit of all mankind to promote the sustainable economic and social development of all States and to safeguard international security, and that

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[1] A/50/752-S/1995/1035, annex III; see Official Records of the Security Council, Fiftieth Year, Supplement for October, November and December 1995, document S/1995/1035.

international cooperation in the use of science and technology through the transfer and exchange of technological know-how for peaceful purposes should be promoted;

2. Invites Member States to undertake additional efforts to apply science and technology for disarmament-related purposes and to make disarmament-related technologies available to interested States;

3. Urges Member States to undertake multilateral negotiations with the participation of all interested States in order to establish universally acceptable, non-discriminatory guidelines for international transfers of dual-use goods and technologies and high technology with military applications;

4. Recalls its resolution 51/39 of 10 December 1996 and its request to the Secretary-General to present the updated report no later than at its fifty-third session;

5. Encourages United Nations bodies to contribute, within existing mandates, to promoting the application of science and technology for peaceful purposes;

6. Decides to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-third session the item entitled "The role of science and technology in the context of international security and disarmament".